(c) how much increase and decrease in the said freight rate has been made during the said period alongwith the dates thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) to (c) The freight rates are different for different regions and vessels sizes. Also, the freight market has been quite volatile during April 2002 to September 2003. During this period, the monthly average freight rates for IOC have varied from Rs. 152.64 per MT in May 2002 to Rs. 445.84 per MT in April 2003. The monthly average freight rate for IOC for the months of April 2002 and September 2003 was Rs. 227.03 per MT and Rs. 199.68 per MT respectively.

Constitution of Sub-Groups

2264. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY:
SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are going to constitute sub-groups under the Task Force to formulate long-term framework for utilization of natural gas available from various sources;

(b) if so, what are the criteria adopted for constituting the sub-groups on 'Transportation' and 'Demand and utilisation' of gas;

(c) whether any request from Government of Andhra Pradesh has been received in the Ministry for inclusion of the representatives in the above sub-Groups; and

(d) if so, what action Government have taken on the request?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) Government have constituted three Sub-Groups under the Task Force to formulate long-term framework for utilization of natural gas available from various sources.

(b) The Sub-Groups have senior members/officials from major stake holders i.e. upstream companies like Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC) and Gujarat State Petroleum Corporation Limited

(GSPCL), transportation companies like GAIL (India) Limited (GAIL) and Assam Gas Company, officials from concerned Ministries/Departments like Power, Fertilizers and Steel and Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) suppliers like Shell India, apart from Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, Director General Hydrocarbon (DGH) and Planning Commission.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) The representative of Government of Andhra Pradesh has been included in all the three Sub-Groups.

Decline in sale of diesel

2265. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR:
SHRI R.P. GOENKA:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is fact that there has been a continuous drop in the demand for diesel in the country during the last two years and the diesel sales witnessed a 3.2 percent decline during the last six months, over the corresponding period last year;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether it is also a fact that large scale adulteration of diesel with the cheaper kerosene has been continuing over a long period; and

(d) if so, the details of specific studies undertaken, if any, and steps taken to make such adulteration unprofitable?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) and (b) The growth in consumption of diesel for the years 2001-02, 2002-03 and April-September, 2003 was as under:

Year	Percentage Growth
2001-02	-3.7
2002-03	0.3
April-Sep, 03 (Provisional)	-3.7